

MICHAEL R. KEITZ
District Attorney



SUPERIOR COURT BUILDING
209 W. Yosemite Avenue
Madera, California 93637

Telephone: (559) 675-7726
Facsimile: (559) 673-0430

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

PRESS RELEASE

December 22, 2009

William Clerk is Sentenced to Twenty Five Years to Life

On Monday, William Charles Clerk was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison under the "Three Strikes" sentencing law, according to Michael Keitz, District Attorney for Madera County.

Clerk, who was previously convicted of multiple felony crimes including robbery, auto theft, attempted auto theft and evading a police officer, was sentenced following his felony conviction on November 6th, 2009 for yet again evading a police officer with willful and wanton disregard for the safety of others.

On March 2nd, 2006, California Highway Patrol Officers encountered Clerk on his motorcycle, southbound Highway 99 near Avenue 17, speeding in excess of 90 mph and endangering the lives of other motorists on the freeway. A second Highway Patrol unit joined pursuit of the motorcycle, which quickly outpaced them. A Highway Patrol helicopter arrived to assist as Clerk neared the Fresno County line. As the officers' vehicles approached Clerk, he accelerated away reaching 140 mph. He then left Highway 99 and entered Highway 41 Southbound. The CHP helicopter continued to follow Clerk Southbound on Highway 41 until he reversed direction, returning to Northbound Highway 99. At McKinley Avenue, CHP officers were able to position their vehicles in front of the motorcycle, forcing Clerk to a halt. He was then arrested.

Keitz said "Clerk's outrageous acts endangered the lives of many innocent people who happened to be traveling on Highways 99 and 41 on that day. This incident, together with Clerk's lengthy criminal history warranted punishment under the "Three Strikes" sentencing law". Resolution of Clerk's case was delayed until 2009 because he was serving another prison term for his previous felony evasion conviction in Alameda County.